



University of Connecticut
Division of Public Safety

Fire Department

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**PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE TESTIMONY
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H.B. No. 6523 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF FIRE CHIEFS AT CERTAIN STATE FACILITIES

Members of the Public Safety and Security Committee, my name is John Mancini, I am the Fire Chief at the University of Connecticut Fire Department. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today in support of HB 6523, AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF FIRE CHIEFS AT CERTAIN STATE FACILITIES.

As Fire Chief for the University of Connecticut, I oversee two fire stations, one at UCONN Storrs and one at the UCONN Health Center in Farmington. We are fully career fire department staffed 24/7.

UConn-Storrs is home of the University of Connecticut's main campus. It has over 500 buildings sitting on ~3000 acres. There are ~17,000 undergraduate students who attend Storrs, with ~12,000 who reside in on-campus housing. In addition there are ~4000, full and part time faculty and staff that support the campus. During the school year, UCONN's daily population can reach ~30,000 depending on activities being held at the time.

The UConn Health Center is home to the School of Medicine, School of Dental Medicine, John Dempsey Hospital, UConn Medical Group, UConn Health Partners, University Dentists and a thriving research enterprise. The Health Center campus consists of 37 buildings totaling over 2.1 million square feet on 200 acres. We have over 5000 employees and more than 500,000 medical encounters occurring on the campus annually.

Last year, the UCONN Fire Department responded to over 7000 emergency calls, which include fire, EMS and haz mat. When UCFD members are not responding to alarms, our members are conducting fire prevention and inspection activities throughout both campuses.

Our fire department members receive the same training as municipal fire departments and in addition, have received specialized firefighting and rescue training that is particular to the needs of our campuses, including confined space rescue, and hazardous materials technician training. Both stations participate in their regional haz mat teams and provide for mutual aid fire response to their surrounding jurisdictions.

In the fire service we use three strategic priorities. They are: **Life Safety, Incident Stabilization and Property Conservation**. At the UCONN Fire Department we have a fourth strategic priority that we use on every response. It is called "**Business Continuity**". Our goal is quickly remediate or isolate the incident so it has less of an impact on the business and mission of the University. Because of the training that our firefighters receive, they are well versed with the life safety systems on campus and are familiar with our buildings, and our campus operations, whether it is one of our many research labs or the hospital at the UCONN Health Center, or one of our dorms or Gampel Pavilion at Storrs.

I strongly urge that you support HB 6523, AN ACT CONCERNING THE AUTHORITY OF FIRE CHIEFS AT CERTAIN STATE FACILITIES. Our patients, students, staff and visitors are best served when the responders that have the specialized and unique knowledge of our facilities and operations, such as the UCONN Fire Department, are in command of emergency incidents.

Thank you for your continued support of the University of Connecticut.